

❖ 1894. ❖

DR. GAYLOR'S
TWENTY-FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE


Ripley Urban District Council,

From January 1st, 1894, to December 31st, 1894.

RIPLEY :

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TO THE

Ripley Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Twenty-first Annual Report dealing with the vital statistics of the District for the year ended December 31st, 1894.

I must here congratulate the new District Council on having their new duties and powers transferred to them from the old Sanitary Authority under favourable circumstances, in so far as the "preventible mortality" for 1894 is concerned. Of course there is very much more to be done, but this Annual Report presented to the new Council shows the general health of the District to be satisfactory up to the last day of the year.

NOTIFICATION OF DISEASES ACT.

The total number notified during the year 1893 was 34. The total number for 1894 is only 10. The diseases are given below:—

Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	6
Diphtheria	-	-	.	2
Erysipelas	-	-	-	2
				—
				10

Another fact is, that *no deaths* occurred during the whole year from any *notifiable disease*, and not a single case of Small Pox, Typhoid, or Puerperal Fever existed in the whole District. There were deaths from a class of Zymotic diseases which are not made notifiable by the Act.

MEASLES.

Five deaths occurred from this disease in December, and four of these were children under 2 years of age, the other 5 years. As you are aware the disease was epidemic in the central portion of the District,

WHOOPING COUGH.

One death was caused by this disease, in a child 21 months old, in June. I couldn't make out whether there were more than a few cases of the disease here and there. It is one of those diseases which a Sanitary Officer can do but little with.

DIARRHŒA.

Four deaths from this disease were registered during the year. One was an aged man near 70 years of age, and the remainder were infants under a year old : and of these I found teething and diet to be the exciting causes, and in none of the cases did I consider insanitary conditions existed to account for the deaths. Of course they were certified as Diarrhœa, and therefore they are classified with the Zymotic class of disease. The Zymotic death rate for the Ripley District for 1894 is 1.37 per 1000 ; and, although we rank these diseases among the "preventible" class, yet in the cases mentioned above they are clearly not so in the present case. The Zymotic or preventible death rate for England and Wales is about 2 per 1000.

The following cases notified were visited by me at the time of their occurrence :—

SCARLET FEVER.

At a house in Old Station Road there were two cases, aged $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 4 years respectively. They were mild cases, and the disease ran its course naturally. The first case went to an infant school, but I failed to obtain any history. At another house in the locality there were three more cases, and these occurred about seven weeks after the others, but I could gather no evidence or proof of contact in any way. These were 13 months and 2 and 3 years respectively. All mild cases, and all did well. One case also occurred at Peas Hill, a boy 6 years of age. The premises here were quite clean, and the house also. This made a good recovery like the last. You will perceive these cases were all in the same locality, so to speak, but the very strictest investigation threw no light upon their history.

DIPHTHERIA.

This occurred at Butterley Hill. It was a woman 43 years of age, and it was a severe case. The drains here were all trapped, and everything in proper order. There had been three others in the house with sore throats about a month before, but they had not developed the Diphtheritic character, and after a week's rest indoors these cases got all right and the parties resumed their employment. It is most probable that this woman (mother of the other persons), living in an atmosphere tainted by these sore throats, and her household duties confining her almost wholly to the house, would act powerfully on what might be a susceptible throat, and a suitable nidus for the disease. The next case occurred in Providence Street. A boy 14 years of age had suffered from quinsy about 12 months previous, and I gathered that his father

was also subject to them. The boy worked a short distance from home. The house was clean and respectable and drains all right. Closet far enough away from being a nuisance. In this case there was the susceptibility history, and there was nothing else to account for it. Of course the disease itself is of a very peculiar nature, and its exact cause and history is at present one of those unsolved problems of science. In all these cases, of course, I give strict verbal instructions as well as leave our own printed caution papers, after having first made a thorough inspection of the surroundings.

ERYSIPELAS.

There were only two cases of this disease notified, and no deaths occurred. They were both of a simple character, and were entirely independent of any insanitary conditions. I have not seen any reason to alter my already expressed opinion about this disease being notifiable. I think it quite useless, at all events among small populations.

PHTHISIS.

There were four deaths from this disease, being the same as for 1893. Persons are paying more attention to general hygienic measures than was formerly the case. Plenty of fresh air and efficient ventilation not only helps the sufferer to convalescence, but minimises the danger of its infectiveness to others. It is pretty well admitted that the sputa which the persons spit up is a source of danger if it should get dried, and so the atmosphere become charged with it in the form of dust. The expectoration should always be burnt, which can be readily done by lining the vessel used with paper so as to facilitate its removal.

BRONCHITIS.

Pneumonia and Pleurisy are also included under this heading, and it will be seen in the causes of death that 24 persons died of these diseases, viz, 12 under 5 years of age, and 12 above 5 years.

INQUEST CASES.

Six inquests were held during the year, as follows :—

- Female, 1 year, scalded by cup of tea.
- Female, 6 years burnt by upsetting a lamp.
- Female, 48 years, found drowned in canal.
- Male, 18 years, drowned whilst bathing.
- Male, 25 years, suddenly, from syncope.
- Female, 62 years, suicide by drowning.

UNCERTIFIED DEATHS.

There were 12 deaths registered without medical certificates, showing that no practitioner of medicine had been called in. The Registrar enters them as "uncertified," and enters the "presumed" cause of death after conferring with the persons who had been in attendance. All this unsatisfactory state of things will shortly be altered, and either the Medical Officer of Health, or some other medical expert, will examine

into the cause of every uncertified death before registration or interment.

Male, 68 years, heart disease.
 Female, 14 months, convulsions.
 Female, 4 years, lung disease.
 Female, 43 years, heart disease.
 Male, 1 hour, premature birth.
 Male, 1 hour, premature birth.
 Female, 5 days, premature birth.
 Female, 6 months, convulsions.
 Female, 12 years, syncope.
 Female, 15 years, heart disease.
 Male, 24 hours, convulsions.
 Male, 1 hour, premature birth.

The uncertified deaths in England and Wales is about 2·8 per cent. ; in Ripley District it is 11 per cent.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES GENERALLY.

The following is the number of deaths in England and Wales from this class of disease, and is put here to show how destructive to human life they are, and how necessary it is to look sharply after any insanitary conditions about our homes, and so very considerably lessen, if not altogether prevent, the dangers which attach to these diseases :—

Small Pox	-	-	-	1,457
Measles	-	-	-	11,110
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	6,982
Typhoid Fever	-	-	-	6,801
Diphtheria	-	-	-	9,466
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	10,176
Diarrhœa, Dysentery, and Cholera	-	-	-	29,721
Puerperal Fever	-	-	-	3,023


There is a large increase in Small Pox and Diphtheria. The former disease was more prevalent on account of the laxity of vaccination. Persons who do not know of the positive efficacy of vaccination are waiting for the Report of the Royal Commission, which has been sitting for some years and doing immense harm by delaying the publication of their Report.

Diphtheria, which used to be thought an almost purely Rural disease, has now become more frequent in Urban Districts, and it is to be hoped that the new antitoxin treatment by the injection of serum under the skin may modify its fatality, if not wholly change it. There is a good deal of obscurity about the cause of the disease, though it is known to be associated with a peculiar microbe ; but how to prevent this minute parasite attacking the throat is at present an unknown quantity.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The infantile death rate, in the proportion of deaths under 1 year of age to the number of registered births, was in England and Wales 159 per 1000. In your District it is 138 per 1000.

THE CAUSES OF DEATH.



Diseases.	Under five years of age	Above five years of age	Total.
Measles	4	1	5
Whooping Cough	1		1
Diarrhoea	3	1	4
Influenza		1	1
Cancer		4	4
Phthisis		4	4
Brain Disease		1	1
Apoplexy		9	9
Paralysis		2	2
Convulsions	9		9
Spinal Disease	1		1
Bronchitis	12	12	24
Heart Disease ..		5	5
Bowel Disease		3	3
Liver Disease		2	2
Debility	3	1	4
Premature Birth	3		3
Old Age		3	3
Uncertified	8	4	12
Inquests	1	5	6
Totals.....	45	58	103

The total number of deaths is 103. Of this number 46 were males and 57 were females; and out of this number 45, or about 43 per cent., were those of children all under 5 years of age. In 1893 this mortality was 39 per cent. of the whole. The deaths occurred in the following quarters of the year:—

March Quarter	-	-	28
June Quarter	-	-	25
September Quarter	-	-	19
December Quarter	-	-	31
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This gives a death rate for 1894 of 14·15 per 1000. Last year the rate was 14·27 per 1000. This must be considered a fairly favourable death rate for a mining and manufacturing district.

The Registrar General's estimate would go to the middle of 1894, and he considers the population at that time was 7070, and the death rate would be 14·42 per 1000. I estimate the population by adding the

excess of births over deaths ; and taking the census as my guide, I estimate the population of the District on the 31st of December, 1894, to be 7276. The deaths at certain ages, according to Table A of the Local Government Board, is as below :—

Under 1 year	-	-	-	33
1 year and under 5 years	-	-	-	12
5	15	-	-	5
15	25	-	-	5
25	65	-	-	24
65 years and upwards	-	-	-	24
Total				103

The average mean age at death of the 45 children was 8 months. This must mean a large amount of neglect and ignorance. It is due in a great measure to early marriages, producing incompetent mothers, who give their children improper diet. Several children at 3 or 4 months old I found out by enquiry got bread and biscuits given them, and many more "the same as we eat," which means all sorts of indigestible material. Many of the cases of Bronchitis in children are due to exposure to cold in night air, and improperly clothed. When children are well fed, properly nursed, and prompt medical attendance provided, the prospects of infant life are good, and it doesn't follow that death must be more prevalent in early life. Of course infant mortality will be greater among the poor than with the rich, but there ought not to be the same wide difference there is. The mean age at death of the 58 persons who survived the dangers of infant life was 54 years. There were out of that number 24 persons 65 years of age and upwards, and their mean age at death was 75 years. The eldest man was 81 and the oldest woman 90 years. The mean death rate for the Ripley District for the last 21 years is 14.83 per 1000.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY FOR 1894.

Deaths under 1 year of age	33	4.54 per 1000, or 32 per cent.
1 year and under 5 years	12	1.64 " 11 "
5 " 15	5	1.41 " 4 "
15 " 25	5	1.41 " 4 "
25 " 65	24	3.28 " 23 "
65 and upwards	24	3.28 " 23 "
Zymotic Diseases	10	1.37 " 9 "
Bronchitis	24	3.28 " 23 "
Inquest Cases	6	.82 " 5 "
Male Deaths	46	6.32 " 44 "
Female Deaths	57	7.68 " 55 "

BIRTHS.

111 boys and 127 girls were born during the year, making a total of 238. This is a *natural increase* of the population of 135 persons. The total birth rate for the year is 32.71 per 1000. The male birth rate was 15.25 per 1000, or 46 per cent. The female birth rate was 17.31 per

1000, or 53 per cent. The mean birth rate for 21 years is 32.21 per 1000. The birth rate for England and Wales is 33.8 per 1000. The death rate for England and Wales is 19 per 1000.

GENERAL INSPECTION.

I visit the District at intervals, and am thoroughly acquainted with all parts of it. Ordinary nuisances do not come before you, as you wouldn't care to be troubled with details of such small matters as untrapped drains, or the same broken swill-tubs near dwellings, manure heaps, &c. In these days I frequently have anonymous letters calling my attention to neighbours' nuisances. My visit often ends in discovering the existence of an old grievance between the parties. Of course all cases which are notified receive a *special visit*, and other less important matters are looked after as required. Since the special visit of Dr. Maclean Wilson, of the Local Government Board, to advise the Authority on the best means of dealing with Cholera outbreak, a good many nuisances have been attended to, but very much remains to be done.

SCAVENGING.

This was one of the most important matters upon which Dr. Wilson laid great stress, and it is now. There are over 700 privies and ashpits being looked over during the year, and in very many cases it is impossible for the cottagers to get the contents removed. Farmers have found out that it costs more than it is worth, and some of the places are wretchedly dirty and refuse matter strewn about the yard. The cottager has no place to put it, even if he did pay for its removal. I look upon it as a frightful source of disease, and should some epidemic come, it would assuredly spread very rapidly, surrounded by such accumulations. Dirt has been said to be matter in the wrong place, and there can be no possible doubt about the necessity of frequent removal of cottagers' refuse. The ashpits have all sorts of vegetable garbage rotting in them, and fish and meat tins, and other contents which get thrown in produces a reeking mass of dangerous filth. The Butterley Company remove it from their own houses, somewhere above a hundred, I believe, and I am obliged to refer to the subject again this year and to urge its consideration by the Council.

DAIRIES AND COW-SHEDS.

These are visited occasionally, and are about 45 in number. They are kept cleaner than they used to be.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

These may be said to be in fairly good order. I sent in a report of one very bad case during the year 1894, when the midden and drains at the same place were in a horrible condition and all condemned.

WATER SUPPLY.

Measures are in progress to supplement the present water supply, and it will be a great boon to the inhabitants who will then be able to

have a continuous and not an intermittent supply—the former safe, and the latter full of dangers.

Now that Marehay is added to the District, and seeing that new houses are being rapidly built, the drainage connections will require some watching.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

This question has advanced another stage since last year. The County Council have put out a scheme formulated by Dr. Barwise, and the whole thing has come to the front. There has never been any dispute about its necessity, we have cases every year to prove that, though 1894 was a favourable year for Ripley District. Authorities have shrunk from it on account of the expense, and in these depressed times it is an element to be taken into account no doubt, but still it can't be put off much longer, and I hope the Authority will take the matter up in earnest.

Gentlemen,—My Annual Report is now complete. There is plenty of evidence around us of the great benefit sanitary work has conferred on the community. There has been a marked degree of lessened sickness. This means a saving of expense and less suffering, so that life is made more enjoyable. There is no doubt the Public Health Act has lengthened the duration of life, though there are large numbers who come into this world with such surroundings that it is almost impossible for them to exist here very long, and it is this which swells the death rate and produces the sickness. Let us hope the next decade will be marked by a great improvement in the condition of the people. In conclusion, I wish to thank you, Gentlemen, for your continued confidence in me as your Officer, and I hope I shall prove worthy to retain it from the new District Council as usual. Thank you for assistance rendered to me in the exercise of my duties, and I congratulate the whole District upon the favourable death rate for 1894, and hope we may so perform our duties that we shall reduce it still more, and then we shall do a great deal towards making people healthy and happy.

I remain, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

EDWARD GAYLOR,

Medical Officer of Health.

